

Blogging as a Learning Tool in Social Studies

Cherry Love B. Montales

College of Development Education, Central Bicol State University of Agriculture, Philippines

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ABSTRACT

This study explored the perceptions of Grade 9 students on the use of blogs in learning Social Studies, focusing on their access to computer and internet, ease of use, and how blogging supports their learning. Grade 9 students participated by completing tasks and reflections on blogs. A validated researcher-made questionnaire and selected interviews were used to gather data. Results showed that most students found blogging easy to use, especially when uploading assignments and adding links. They appreciated the flexibility it offered and the chance to communicate with their teacher through the comment section. However, some students experienced difficulty in navigating blog features, showing a need for proper orientation. Blogging was also seen as helpful in increasing students' interest and engagement in the subject. Most students relied on school facilities due to limited internet access at home. Overall, blogging supported student learning when combined with clear instructions and access to technology, making it a practical tool not only in Social Studies but also in other subjects.

INTRODUCTION

The fast development of information and communication technologies has brought many changes to education. Teachers now use different digital tools to make learning more engaging and meaningful. One of these tools is the blog, or weblog. Blogs give students a personal online space where they can write, reflect, and receive feedback from their teachers and classmates (Marín, 2020).

With the growth of Web 2.0 technology, blogs have become common in classrooms. They allow students to work at their own pace and share their ideas in creative ways. Blogs are especially useful for tasks that involve writing and reflection, such as journals, projects, or digital portfolios (Garcia et al., 2019). These features make blogs a good fit for Social Studies, where students are expected to think critically, reflect on society, and express their opinions clearly.

Research shows that blogs can improve student engagement and help them become more active in their learning. Studies report that students feel more interested and responsible when they use blogs for school tasks (Kilic & Gökdaş, 2014; Van Wyk, 2013). In Social Studies, blogging allows learners to connect what they learn in class to real-world issues. They can also use blogs to write reflections, create timelines, and share their opinions on topics like history, culture, and current events (Jimoyiannis & Tsiotakis, 2017).

Blogs are also useful for teachers. They make it easier to assess student learning through digital portfolios. Chuang (2010) found that students who used blogs became more aware of how they learn and were better able to track their progress. Still, there are some challenges. Not all students have access to the internet or their own computers. Many rely on school computer labs or local internet cafés, which limits how often they can blog (Christie & Morris, 2021).

However, not all students have equal access to digital tools. In many public schools, learners depend on shared resources like school computer laboratories or internet cafés. These limitations can affect their ability to complete blog tasks outside class hours (Christie & Morris, 2021). Despite this, students often see blogs as helpful for flexible learning and expressing themselves in creative ways (Kilic & Gökdaş, 2014; Van Wyk, 2013).

This study aimed to explore the perceptions of Grade 9 students on the use of blogs in learning Social Studies. Specifically, it sought to answer the following research questions:

1. Where do students access computers and the internet for their blogging activities?
2. What are students' perceptions of the ease of using blogs as an assessment tool?
3. How does the use of blogs support students' learning in Social Studies?

In this research, students were introduced to the use of blogs as part of an e-portfolio assessment. Using a guided framework, they completed Social Studies tasks and uploaded them to their personal blog pages on Blogger. Once they finished their posts, they reflected on their learning using specific reflection guide questions.

The expected outcome of this study is to understand how blogging can help improve classroom instruction and student learning in Social Studies. The findings may encourage the Social Studies Department to adopt this digital strategy not only for Grade 9 but also in other levels such as Grade 7 (Asian History), Grade 8 (World History), and Grade 10 (Contemporary Issues). Other subjects that require reflective writing—like *Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao*, Filipino, and English—may also benefit from using blogs as part of their teaching methods.

Review Of Related Literature and Studies

Many studies have shown that blogging is helpful in education. Blogs allow students to reflect, write freely, and connect with others, which helps improve their learning. Weller, Pegler, and Mason (2005) explained that blogs can be used in different ways, but one of the most useful is as a personal journal or digital portfolio. Students can share their thoughts, keep track of what they learn, and show their progress over time.

Karthika & Akshaya (2025) also found that using blogs in class helped students interact more and reflect better. Blogs gave them a chance to think about what they were learning and how they were learning it. Hemmi, Bayne, and Land (2009) added that when students had their own private blogs, they felt more comfortable sharing their thoughts. Teachers were also able to give more personal and helpful feedback. This safe space made students more confident in sharing their ideas.

In another study, Williams and Jacobs (2004) saw that blogging allowed students to exchange ideas with their classmates. It created a space for learning outside the classroom. Similarly, Kumar (2009) and Coutinho (2007) found that students believed blogs were a powerful communication tool that encouraged more classroom interaction.

Kilic and Gökdaş (2014) studied how pre-service teachers used blogs and found that students enjoyed learning through blogs. They said it helped them understand the lessons better and allowed them to reflect in their own way. Chuang (2010) supported this, saying blogs make assessment easier for both students and teachers. Blogs show student progress more clearly than other tools. However, Chuang also said that when blogs are used in group work, it can be hard for teachers to track who posted what. He suggested making blogs more personalized in future classroom use.

Access to the internet is also an important topic when using blogs in education. Kennedy, Judd, Churchward, and Gray (2008) found that not all students have access to computers or internet at home, even though they might be tech-savvy. This is also seen in many public schools where students rely on computer labs or have to rent computer time. Christie and Morris (2019) noted that limited access can affect how students use digital tools for learning.

Even though blogs have been used in college and language classes, there's still not much research about blogging in junior high Social Studies classes. This study helps fill that gap by looking at how Grade 9 students see the use of blogs in their Social Studies class.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a descriptive research method to understand how students perceive the use of blogs in their Social Studies class. Descriptive research is appropriate for identifying and explaining how a group of individuals feels or behaves under current conditions. It was chosen because the goal of this study was to describe the students' experiences and opinions related to using blogs as a learning and assessment tool.

The participants in this study were selected from one Grade 9 class in a public secondary school. The class was chosen through purposive sampling because the students had already been introduced to blogging during the grading period. The group included students from different academic backgrounds, making it suitable for gathering diverse opinions.

Data was gathered using a researcher-made questionnaire, which was reviewed and validated by an education expert, a school administrator, and Social Studies teachers. The questionnaire had three parts. The first part asked students about their access to computers and internet. The second part focused on how easy it was for them to use blogs. The third part examined how blogging helped them in learning Social Studies. To better understand the results and support the data, a few students were also interviewed. These interviews provided more detailed explanations and gave a deeper look into the students' thoughts and experiences.

Before the actual data collection, the researcher requested permission from the school principal and other school officials. After approval was granted, a one-day orientation was given to the students to introduce them to blogging and explain how to create and manage. Students were then given assigned tasks to complete and upload to their blogs starting the Second Grading Period. After they finished all the blogging activities, they were asked to answer the questionnaire. Selected students also took part in short interviews to clarify their responses.

Once all the data had been gathered, the responses were tallied and organized into tables. The results were analyzed and interpreted based on the research questions. A narrative report was then written and shared with school stakeholders to inform them about the findings.

As part of ethical research practice, all participants were informed about the purpose of the study. Their participation was voluntary, and they were assured that their responses would remain confidential. No names or identifying information were recorded in the questionnaire or interview notes. The data was used solely for academic purposes and to improve classroom teaching strategies.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Student Access to Technology

Students access computers and the internet for their blogging activities. Based on the data, **58% of students** reported using the school's computer laboratory. Another **30%** accessed the internet through computer shops, while only **12%** had access at home.

These findings show that most students do not have personal access to digital tools at home. Instead, they rely on shared or paid resources such as the school lab or rental computers in public internet shops. This highlights a key challenge in implementing digital tasks like blogging, as students may face time constraints and availability issues. These results support the findings of Kennedy et al. (2008), who noted that not all students, even those familiar with technology, have reliable access to computers and the internet outside of school. Therefore, schools must plan carefully to support students by providing more flexible computer lab access and considering alternatives for students with limited digital resources.

Perceptions on the Ease of Using Blogs

Students generally found blogging easy and manageable when used as a tool for submitting their Social Studies tasks. The overall mean score for this area was **3.59**, which falls under *Strongly Agree*. This shows that most students were comfortable using blogs during the activity.

The highest-rated item was *"It was easier to create links to the articles instead of uploading them straight into the blog"*, with a mean of **3.90**. This means that students liked the convenience of simply linking sources rather

than attaching files. Posting links helped them complete tasks faster and with less technical hassle. Other items also received high ratings, like *"Uploading work to the blog was easier than submitting hard copies"* (**3.86**) and

"It is easy to use blogging" (**3.80**), suggesting that blogging was seen as a practical and user-friendly option compared to traditional methods.

Still, one of the lowest-rated items was *"The blog was easy to navigate"*, with a mean of **3.22**, though this is still in the *Agree* category. This tells us that while most students managed to use the blog successfully, a few had trouble finding their way around the platform. These difficulties might be caused by lack of experience or limited exposure to digital tools.

This result shows that although blogging is simple for many, first-time users might still feel unsure without proper guidance. Some students may need help understanding how to organize posts, add links, or change blog settings. For this reason, giving a short orientation or demo before using blogging for schoolwork is important. It can prevent confusion and help students focus more on their content than on the technical side.

This finding is supported by Marín (2020), who pointed out that students use blogs more effectively when teachers give clear instructions and provide examples. Garcia et al. (2019) also emphasized that ease of use plays a big role in whether students accept digital tools for learning. Likewise, Hemmi et al. (2009) found that students do well when they're supported with both technical guidance, and freedom to explore on their own. This means that blogging, when paired with proper preparation, can be a very helpful tool in the classroom.

Influence of Blogging on Learning in Social Studies

Students shared strong positive views on how blogging supported their learning in Social Studies. The overall mean score for this area was **3.65**, which is interpreted as *Strongly Agree*. This suggests that blogging made a meaningful contribution to how students completed tasks, engaged with lessons, and expressed their ideas.

Among the statements, the highest-rated was *"Blogging is a great tool for writing assignments and take-home projects"*, with a mean score of **3.90**. Students found blogging to be a convenient way to submit their written work. They appreciated the flexibility of completing tasks on their own schedule and the ease of organizing their content online.

Another well-rated item was *"The comments section increased dialogue between me and my teacher"* (**3.72**), showing that blogging helped open communication lines. Students were able to receive feedback, ask questions, and interact with their teacher in ways that traditional methods might not allow. This kind of interaction is important in Social Studies, where reflection and feedback are key parts of the learning process.

Flexibility was also an important benefit. Students agreed that blogging gave them more freedom in managing their tasks, as shown by the score of **3.64** for the statement *"Blogging gave me more flexibility in completing tasks."* They also agreed that blogging increased their interest in the subject (**3.50**), suggesting that digital tools like blogs can help make lessons more engaging and relevant to their lives.

The statement *"Blogging increased the quality of my work"* received a mean of **3.52**, still within the *Strongly Agree* range. This shows that many students felt blogging had a positive influence on the standard of their outputs, although a few were unsure if it directly improved the quality. This may be due to their limited experience with using blogs as a formal platform for schoolwork.

The results imply that blogging can be an effective support tool in Social Studies, especially for tasks that require writing, reflection, and communication. It encourages student autonomy and gives them more control over their learning. However, for blogging to be fully effective, students need proper guidance, digital access, and continued practice to gain confidence and improve the quality of their outputs.

These findings support the conclusions of Weller, Pegler, and Mason (2005), who noted that blogs are valuable for student reflection and portfolio creation. Similarly, Chuang (2010) highlighted how blogs can track student progress and increase awareness of one's own learning. The positive effects on flexibility and communication also reflect the observations of Hemmi et al. (2009), who found that blogs offer a safe and interactive space for students to develop their ideas and receive feedback. Moreover, Van Wyk (2013) observed that blogging helped

increase student motivation and engagement in class-related tasks, which aligns with the responses in this study.

CONCLUSIONS

The results of this study show that blogging is supportive in the classroom, especially when it comes to helping students learn in more flexible, reflective, and student-centered ways. These findings suggest that when used properly, blogging does not only serve as a digital submission tool but also as a platform that supports student engagement, promotes self-expression, and improves communication between students and teachers.

Students found blogging easy to use and more convenient than traditional methods of submitting assignments. They liked having the freedom to complete tasks at their own pace and the opportunity to communicate through the comment section. More than that, blogging helped students feel more connected to the subject matter, which can make learning more enjoyable and meaningful.

However, the study also shows that digital tools like blogs cannot be fully effective without proper support. Some students faced difficulty in navigating blog features, especially those who were using the platform for the first time. This means that digital learning tools, no matter how helpful, must come with clear instructions and guidance. In addition, limited access to internet and devices remains a challenge that schools need to address if blogging or any online activity is to become part of regular classroom practice.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Teachers can use blogging as a helpful tool for writing tasks, reflections, and class projects, especially in Social Studies and other subjects like English and Filipino. Before starting, students should be given clear instructions and support so they can use the platform with confidence. Schools should also give students enough access to computers and the internet to help them complete their blogging activities without difficulty.

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Table 1 Perceptions on the Ease of Using Blog

<i>Perceptions On The Ease Of Using Blog</i>	Strongly Agree (3.01-4.00)	Agree (2.01-3.00)	Disagree (1.01-2.00)	Strongly Disagree (0.00-1.00)	Mean	Interpretation	Rank
It is easy to use blog.	5	35	10	0	3.8	Strongly Agree	3
Sufficient information was provided for using blogs.	6	20	19	5	3.42	Strongly Agree	4
Uploading work directly to the blog was easier than submitting hard copy.	28	15	7	0	3.86	Strongly Agree	2
The blog was easy to navigate.	0	16	29	5	3.22	Agree	6
I was familiar with some of the blog tools.	2	18	28	2	3.36	Strongly Agree	5
It was easier to create links to the articles instead of uploading them straight into the blog.	8	37	5	0	3.9	Strongly Agree	1

Table 2 Perception on The Influence of Support of Blogging to Learning Social Studies

	Strongly agree (3.01-4.00)	Agree (2.01-3.00)	Disagree (1.01-2.00)	Strongly disagree (0.00-1.00)	Mean	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
Using blogs increased my interest in learning.	60	96	16	3	3.5	Strongly Agree	6
Using blogs gave me more	24	144	12	2	3.64	Strongly Agree	3

flexibility in completing my tasks.							
Using blogs increased the quality of my work.	36	120	18	2	3.52	Strongly Agree	5
The comments section increased dialogue between me and my teacher.	16	156	14	0	3.72	Strongly Agree	2
Blogs are great tools for writing assignments and take-home projects	148	40	4	3	3.9	Strongly Agree	1